

REMARKS

Claims 1-15, 25 and 26 remain pending in the present application. Claims 19-21, 23, 24 and 27-34 have been cancelled. Claims 1 and 25 have been amended. Basis for the amendments can be found throughout the specification, claims and drawings as originally filed.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 3, 6, 19, 25, 27, 30 and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Noji, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,157,932). Claim 32 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 32 depended from Claim 31 which depended from Claim 1. Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of Claims 31 and 32 and Claims 31 and 32 have been cancelled. Thus, Applicants believe Claim 1, as amended, patentably distinguishes over the art of record. Likewise, Claims 3 and 6, which ultimately depend from Claim 1, are also believed to patentably distinguish over the art of record. Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 19 has been cancelled. Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 33 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 33 depended from Claim 25. Claim 25 has been amended to include the limitations of Claim 33 and Claim 33 has been cancelled.

Thus, Applicants believe Claim 25, as amended, patentably distinguishes over the art of record. Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 27, 30 and 34 have been cancelled. Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3, 6, 10, 19, 21, 25, 27 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kamiya, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,202,934) in view of Noji, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,157,932). Claims 4 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Noji, et al. in view of Kamiya, et al. in further view of Omura (U.S. Pat. No. 5,408,837). Claims 1 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawai, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,397,615) in view of Noji, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,157,932). Claim 32 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 32 depended from Claim 31 which depended from Claim 1. Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of Claims 31 and 32 and Claims 31 and 32 have been cancelled. Thus, Applicants believe Claim 1, as amended, patentably distinguishes over the art of record. Likewise, Claims 3, 4, 6, 10 and 14, which ultimately depend from Claim 1, are also believed to patentably distinguish over the art of record. Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 19 and 21 have been cancelled. Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 33 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 33 depended from Claim 25. Claim 25 has been amended to include the limitations of Claim 33 and Claim 33 has been cancelled. Thus, Applicants believe Claim 25, as amended, patentably distinguishes over the art of record. Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 27 and 30 have been cancelled.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Independent Claim 9 was indicated as being allowable.

REJOINDER

Applicants respectfully request the rejoinder of withdrawn Claims 2, 5, 7, 8, 11-13, 15 and 26.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner

believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

By:


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